

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Administration for Children and Families

Office of Child Support Enforcement

Funding Opportunity Title: Section 1115 Demonstration Grants

Announcement Type: Initial-Grant

Funding Opportunity Number: HHS-2005-ACF-OCSE-FD-0006

CFDA Number: 93.564

Due Date of Applications: April 5, 2005

Additional Overview Content

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) invites applications from State Title IV-D agencies for fiscal year 2005 funding of demonstration activities intended to add to the knowledge and to promote the objectives of the Child Support Enforcement Program under section 1115 and Title IV-D of the Social Security Act. Only State Title IV-D agencies or the umbrella agencies of which they are a part are eligible to apply for these grants. Throughout the priorities, we note that faith and community-based organizations may be used as collaborators with the States in the proposed projects, as appropriate.

Applications will be screened and evaluated as indicated in this program announcement. Awards will be contingent on the outcomes of the competition and the availability of funds. For new grants in FY 2005, \$1,143,575 is available for all priority areas. The section 1115 funds awarded to each project will represent 29 percent of the total project costs. For the purposes of the demonstration project, the total expenditures will be treated as State expenditures under Title IV-D that will be reimbursed by the regular Federal match of 66 percent of expenditures for Title IV-D administrative activities. Grantees must provide at least five percent of the total approved cost of the project. The total approved cost of the project is the sum of the ACF grant award under section 1115, regular Title IV-D Federal Financial Participation (FFP), and the State share. An example of the project budget for one possible grant award available under this announcement is provided below under Section III.3. Applicants must prepare a formal budget on the required forms, as listed in IV.3, below. The section 1115 grant (29 percent of the total), the State match (five percent of the total), and the Title IV-D match (66 percent of the total) must be identified separately on the budget forms.

On October 21, 2004, OCSE conducted an audio conference call on “Writing a Grant Application Made Easy.” The material presented covered major differences between Section 1115 and Special Improvement Project (SIP) grant programs, key elements of the evaluation criteria, and advice on what to include and common mistakes to avoid. It did not cover the

details of the published announcement or discuss the specific priority areas. The recorded tape of this call is available through January 31, 2005 toll free at 1-866-442-8065.

Background of Priority Areas for Fiscal Year 2005

The National Child Support Enforcement Strategic Plan [the Plan] has been revised recently. The revised Plan:

...is the result of a lengthy collaborative effort. It reflects more than ten years of child support professionals brainstorming and consensus-building among branches and levels of government....The FY 2005-2009 Plan weaves a modern mosaic from a set of updated objectives and related strategies. These objectives and strategies demonstrate how the Child Support Enforcement (CSE) Program has evolved and matured. Child support is no longer primarily a welfare reimbursement, revenue-producing device for the Federal and State governments; it is a family-first program, intended to ensure families' self-sufficiency by making child support a more reliable source of income. [2005-2009 National Child Support Enforcement Strategic Plan & Measures, page 1]

A key aspect of the Plan is a set of strategies for seeking to meet the goals of the Plan. We seek to help implement those strategies through our requests for demonstration projects in the priority areas outlined in this announcement.

Anticipated Total Program Funding:	\$1,143,575
Anticipated Number of Awards:	10
Ceiling on Amount of Individual Awards (Section 1115 funds):	\$60,000 to \$175,000 per budget period
Floor on Amount of Individual Awards (Section 1115 funds):	None

An application that exceeds the stated priority area ceiling will be considered non-responsive.

Eligible Applicants:

Eligible applicants for these Section 1115 demonstration project grants are State (including the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands) Title IV-D or human services umbrella agencies only.

Cost Sharing and Matching: Yes

Failure to provide the required cost sharing/matching amount will result in a disallowance of unmatched federal funds.

Electronic link to full Announcement:

Click on the following link: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/open/HHS-2005-ACF-OCSE-FD-0006.html>

If you have problems linking to the full announcement contact:

Name: James Rich
E-mail address: jrich@acf.hhs.gov

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Priority Area 1:

Reducing Intervention and Use of Adversarial or Formal Proceedings While Increasing Financial Security for Children Born Out of Wedlock

1. Description

In this priority area, we are looking for States to develop and implement innovative strategies that will lead to regular financial support for children, while minimizing the need for adversarial proceedings, or formal administrative or judicial proceedings, or minimizing the need to take formal or punitive actions in order to collect support that is owed by a noncustodial parent. These strategies might include the agency, institution, or organization staff encouraging voluntary paternity establishment; providing information (and referral services) to unwed parents about the impact of marriage and single parenting on the financial security of children; and/or providing mediation services for low-income parents. For example, at the time of paternity establishment, or during child support enforcement order establishment, the staff of the institution, agency, or organization will encourage the parents to re-examine their choices for their child in addition to providing child support. For those who are interested, the staff of the agency, institution, or organization will refer them to healthy marriage programs. For those parents who are not interested in marriage, the staff of the agency, institution, or organization might help the parents reach agreement on the appropriate child support order amount based on CSE state guidelines, referring them, as appropriate, to pro se information or legal services for information on visitation and custody, or encourage them to reach direct agreement and stipulation.

II. Award Information

Funding Instrument Type:	Grant
Anticipated Total Priority Area Funding:	\$433,575 per budget period
Anticipated Number of Awards:	4
Ceiling on Amount of Individual Awards:	\$108,400 per budget period
Floor on Amount of Individual Awards:	None
Average Projected Award Amount:	\$108,400 per budget period
Length of Project Periods:	36 months with three 12-month budget periods

An application that exceeds the upper value of the dollar range specified will be considered non-responsive.

Under the matching formula, each total project budget would be \$373,793 in State, Federal Section 1115, and Federal Title IV-D funds in each funding year. The amount provided for the project depends on the level of effort needed to conduct it. OCSE reserves the right to fund the project at an amount and level of effort less than that proposed by the applicant.

Priority Area 2:

Developing a Comprehensive System of Early Intervention That Will Avoid Future Problems

1. Description:

Often, there are problems or issues in the child support process from the beginning. OCSE is looking for creative, comprehensive approaches by States that will avoid or minimize those problems. We seek projects that will test the development and implementation of a comprehensive system covering at least three of the following activities (or other identified applicant strategies consistent with this priority): increasing voluntary payment of support, reducing arrears, and providing for child support as a more reliable source of income. Such strategies could include easy access to genetic testing for parents of children born out of wedlock; early intervention to modify orders, correcting mismatches between ordered payments and ability to pay; revised guidelines, especially in low-income cases, to reflect shared custody, account for visitation, and consider both parents' incomes and health insurance resources; avoidance of default cases through better service of process; approaches that are sensitive and responsive to ethnic and cultural differences; automated and non-automated steps to alert and work with parents to resume payments when payments are missed; and/or automation tools that spotlight opportunities for early intervention to avoid payment problems.

II. Award Information

Funding Instrument Type:	Grant
Anticipated Total Priority Area Funding:	\$350,000 per budget period
Anticipated Number of Awards:	2
Ceiling of Individual Awards:	\$175,000 per budget period
Floor on Amount of Individual Awards:	None
Average Projected Award Amount:	\$175,000
Length of Project Periods:	36 month with three 12-month budget periods

An application that exceeds the upper value of the dollar range specified will be considered non-responsive.

Under the matching formula, each total project budget would be \$603,448 in State, Federal Section 1115, and Federal Title IV-D funds in each funding year. The amount provided for the project depends on the level of effort needed to conduct it. OCSE reserves the right to fund the project at an amount and level of effort less than that proposed by the applicant.

Priority Area 3:

Having Reliable and Regular Payments Made in Cases with Infrequent Payments

1. Description:

Some non-custodial parents [NCPs] pay child support primarily only once a year, e.g., by income tax offset, or only when a debt is substantial and they are forced to pay a lump sum. OCSE is seeking demonstrations that would identify and analyze the reasons for these payment patterns and design and test methods of encouraging the NCPs to pay more regularly. Debt might be relieved with the obligee's permission and/or the State might relieve uncollectible debt in return for regular, reliable payment of current support.

II. Award Information

Funding Instrument Type:	Grant
Anticipated Total Priority Area Funding:	\$120,000 per budget period
Anticipated Number of Awards:	2
Ceiling of Individual Awards:	\$60,000 per budget period
Floor on Amount of Individual Awards:	None
Average Projected Award Amount:	\$60,000 per budget period
Length of Project Periods:	17 months

An application that exceeds the upper value of the dollar range specified will be considered non-responsive.

Under the matching formula, each total project budget would be \$206,897 in State, Federal Section 1115, and Federal Title IV-D funds. The amount provided for the project depends on the level of effort needed to conduct it. OCSE reserves the right to fund the project at an amount and level of effort less than that proposed by the applicant.

Priority Area 4:

Use of Specific Collaboration Protocols with Other Agencies

1. Description:

State and local child support agencies depend on other agencies for the receipt of information that enables them to locate both custodial and non-custodial parents [NCPs], to have children's health needs met, and to address other aspects of the support of the children and families they serve. OCSE invites proposed demonstrations that would emphasize timely, accurate data exchanges, including standardized data interfaces, with agencies that administer these programs, in order to expedite the establishment of parentage and develop effective communication models between Child Support Enforcement agencies and TANF, Child Welfare, and Medicaid agencies, as well as birthing centers, courts, and vital records offices.

States would develop a partnership with another State or local agency and demonstrate how the use of technology, including automated processes, improves performance in both programs. The agencies would develop an interagency agreement designed to be of mutual benefit to the partners. The demonstration would assess the impact of the partnership and use of technology on child support goals, such as paternity establishment, support order establishment, or the payment of current or overdue support. The partner agency would identify its own goals and results and track its program outcomes. The evaluation should include the impact of the intervention on the goals and results of the child support and the partner agencies.

II. Award Information

Funding Instrument Type:	Grant
Anticipated Total Priority Area Funding:	\$240,000 per project period
Anticipated Number of Awards:	2
Ceiling of Individual Awards:	\$120,000 per project period
Floor on Amount of Individual Awards:	None
Average Projected Award Amount:	\$120,000 per project period
Length of Project Periods:	17 months

An application that exceeds the upper value of the dollar range specified will be considered non-responsive.

Under the matching formula, each total project budget would be \$413,793 in State, Federal Section 1115, and Federal Title IV-D funds. The amount provided for the project depends on the level of effort needed to conduct it. OCSE reserves the right to fund the project at an amount and level of effort less than that proposed by the applicant.

III. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants:

Eligible applicants for these Section 1115 demonstration project grants are State (including the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands) Title IV-D or human services umbrella agencies only.

Additional Information on Eligibility

Throughout the priorities, we note that States may collaborate with faith and community-based organizations in the proposed projects, as appropriate.

2. Cost sharing and Matching: Yes

Failure to provide the required cost sharing/matching amount will result in a disallowance of unmatched federal funds.

All grant awards are subject to the availability of appropriated funds. The section 1115 funds awarded to each project will represent 29 percent of the total project costs. For the purposes of the demonstration project, the total expenditures will be treated as State expenditures under Title IV-D that will be reimbursed by the regular Federal match of 66 percent of expenditures for Title IV-D administrative activities. Grantees must provide at least five percent of the total approved cost of the project. The total approved cost of the project is the sum of the ACF grant award under section 1115, regular Title IV-D Federal Financial Participation (FFP), and the State share. Applicants must prepare a formal budget on the required forms, as listed in Section IV.3., below. The proposed State **five percent** match must be identified on the budget forms. Matching funds must be provided in cash; they may not be in-kind. However, services provided by the grantee State are not considered in-kind funds.

An example of the project budget for one possible grant award available under this announcement is:

Source	Amount	% of Project Budget
Sec. 1115 Grant Award	\$ 60,000	29%
State Share	\$ 10,345	5%
Title IV-D administration FFP	\$136,552	66%
Total Project Budget	\$206,897	100%

3. Other Eligibility Information:

No grant award will be made under this announcement on the basis of an incomplete application.

All applicants must have a Dun & Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number. On June 27, 2003, the Office of Management and Budget published in the Federal Register a new Federal policy applicable to all Federal grant applicants. The policy requires all Federal grant applicants to provide a Dun & Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number when applying for Federal grants or cooperative agreements on or after October 1, 2003. The DUNS number will be required whether an applicant is submitting a paper application or using the government-wide electronic portal (www.Grants.gov). A DUNS number will be required for every application for a new award or renewal/continuation of an award, including applications or plans under formula, entitlement, and block grant programs, submitted on or after October 1, 2003.

Please ensure that your organization has a DUNS number. You may acquire a DUNS number at no cost by calling the dedicated toll-free DUNS number request line on 1-866-705-5711 or you may request a number on-line at <http://www.dnb.com>.

Disqualification Factors:

An application that exceeds the upper value of the dollar range specified will be considered non-responsive.

Any application received after 4:30 p.m. eastern time on the deadline date will not be considered for competition.

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. Address to Request Application Package:

Xavier Nelson
OCSE/ACF
Aerospace Building
370 L'Enfant Promenade, SW.
4th Floor East
Washington, DC 20447
Phone: 202-401-5373
E-mail: xnelson@acf.hhs.gov

2. Content and Form of Application Submission

An original and two copies of the complete application are required. The original and each of the two copies must include all required forms, certifications, assurances, and appendices, be signed by an authorized representative, have original signatures on the original, and be submitted unbound.

The applicant should clearly **indicate in its application(s) for which specific priority area it is applying**. This information is necessary in order that the application be judged according to the priority area description and in competition with other applications. Applicants may submit different applications covering different priority areas or they may submit different applications for different projects under one priority area; however, **they may not submit one application for the same project covering multiple priority areas**. The length of the application, excluding the application forms, certifications, and resumes, should be no more than 25 pages double-spaced. A page is a single-side of an 8 1/2" x 11" sheet of plain white paper. (Applicants are requested not to send pamphlets, maps, brochures or other printed material along with their application as these are difficult to photocopy. These materials, if submitted, will not be included in the review process.) Each page of the application will be counted (excluding required forms, certifications and resumes) to determine the total length. **The project description should include all the information requirements described in the specific evaluation criteria outlined under Part V.**

To facilitate the review of applications, applicants should address each requirement in the priority area description under the appropriate section of the program narrative statement. The reviewers will determine the strengths and weaknesses of each application using the evaluation

criteria listed below, provide verbal and written comments, and assign numerical scores to each application.

In addition to the project description, the applicant needs to complete all the standard forms required for making applications for awards under this announcement. Applicants requesting financial assistance for non-construction projects must file the Standard Form 424B, "Assurances: Non-Construction Programs." Applicants must sign and return the Standard Form 424B with their applications.

You may submit your application to us either in electronic or paper format. To submit an application electronically, please use the www.Grants.gov/Apply site. If you use Grants.gov, you will be able to download a copy of the application package, complete it off-line, and then upload and submit the application via the Grants.gov site. You may not e-mail an electronic copy of a grant application to ACF.

Please note the following if you plan to submit your application electronically via Grants.gov:

- Electronic submission is voluntary
- When you enter the Grants.gov site, you will find information about submitting an application electronically through the site, as well as the hours of operation. We strongly recommend that you do not wait until the application deadline date to begin the application process through Grants.gov.
- To use Grants.gov, you, as the applicant, must have a DUNS Number and register in the Central Contractor Registry (CCR). You should allow a minimum of five days to complete the CCR registration.
- You will not receive additional point value because you submit a grant application in paper format.
- You may submit all documents electronically, including all information typically included on the SF424 and all necessary assurances and certifications.
- Your application must comply with any page limitation requirements described in this program announcement.
- After you electronically submit your application, you will receive an automatic acknowledgement from Grants.gov that contains a Grants.gov tracking number. The Administration for Children and Families will retrieve your application from Grants.gov.
- We may request that you provide original signatures on forms at a later date.
- You may access the electronic application for this program on www.Grants.gov
- You must search for the downloadable application package by the CFDA number.

An original and two copies of the complete application are required. The original and each of the two copies must include all required forms, certifications, assurances, and appendices, be signed by an authorized representative, have original signatures, and be submitted unbound.

Applicants have the option of omitting from the application copies (not the original) specific salary rates or amounts for individuals specified in the application budget.

Standard Forms and Certifications:

The project description should include all the information requirements described in the specific evaluation criteria outlined in the program announcement under Section V Application Review Information. In addition to the project description, the applicant needs to complete all the standard forms required for making applications for awards under this announcement.

Applicants seeking financial assistance under this announcement must file the Standard Form (SF) 424, Application for Federal Assistance; SF-424A, Budget Information--Non-Construction Programs; SF-424B, Assurances--Non-Construction Programs. The forms may be reproduced for use in submitting applications. Applicants must sign and return the standard forms with their application.

Applicants must furnish prior to award an executed copy of the Standard Form LLL, Certification Regarding Lobbying, when applying for an award in excess of \$100,000. Applicants who have used non-Federal funds for lobbying activities in connection with receiving assistance under this announcement shall complete a disclosure form, if applicable, with their applications (approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 0348-0046). Applicants must sign and return the certification with their application.

Applicants must also understand they will be held accountable for the smoking prohibition included within P.L. 103-227, Title XII Environmental Tobacco Smoke (also known as the PRO-KIDS Act of 1994). A copy of the Federal Register notice which implements the smoking prohibition is included with forms. By signing and submitting the application, applicants are providing the certification and need not mail back the certification with the application.

Applicants must make the appropriate certification of their compliance with all Federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination. By signing and submitting the applications, applicants are providing the certification and need not mail back the certification form. Complete the standard forms and the associated certifications and assurances based on the instructions on the forms.

The forms and certifications may be found at: www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/forms.htm.

Please see **Section V.1. Criteria**, for instructions on preparing the full project description.

Additional Application Requirements:

Each application must be submitted in accordance with the guidance provided below.

- a) The application must be signed by an individual authorized to act for the applicant agency and to assume responsibility for the obligations imposed by terms and conditions of the grant award.
- b) If more than one State's agency is involved in submitting a single application, **one State agency must be identified as the applicant organization that will have legal responsibility for the grant.**
- c) On the SF-424, Item 15, use this line for a Section 1115 funds requested, use line c for State funds and line e for Title IV-D matching funds. Use the same divisions in columns (1), (2), and (3) in #6 (Section B) and columns (b), (c) and (d) of row 8 (Section C) of the 424A. In the other entries on the 424A, add the State and Title IV-D shares as non-Federal.
- d) Applicants should NOT include funds for trips to conferences or to OCSE's Central Office in Washington, DC. If OCSE requests such visits, it will reimburse the grantee for them.
- e) Construction costs may not be included in the project.

3. Submission Dates and Times

Due Date: April 5, 2005

Explanation of Application Due Dates

The closing time and date for the receipt of applications is 4:30 p.m., eastern time, April 5, 2005. Mailed or hand-delivered applications received after 4:30 p.m., eastern time, on the closing date will be classified as late. Applicants may choose to mail applications or have them hand-delivered.

Deadline: Mailed applications shall be considered as meeting an announced deadline if they are received on or before the deadline time and date at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Grants Management, Division of Discretionary Grants, 370 L'Enfant Promenade, SW., Washington, DC 20447, between Monday and Friday (excluding Federal holidays). This address must appear on the envelope/package containing the application with the note "Attention: Sylvia M. Johnson." Applicants are responsible for mailing applications well in advance, when using all mail services, to ensure that the applications are received on or before the deadline time and date.

Applications hand-carried by applicants, applicant couriers, other representative of the applicant, or by overnight/express mail couriers shall be considered as meeting the announced deadline if they are received on or before the deadline date, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., eastern time, at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Grants Management, Division of Discretionary Grants, ACF Mailroom, 2nd Floor (near loading dock), Aerospace Building, 901 D Street, SW., Washington, DC 20024, between Monday and Friday (excluding Federal holidays). This address must appear on the

envelope/package containing the application with the note. (Applicants are cautioned that express/overnight mail services do not always deliver as agreed.)

Late applications: Applications that do not meet the criteria above are considered late applications. ACF shall notify each late applicant that its application will not be considered in the current competition.

Any application **received** after 4:30 p.m., eastern time, on the deadline date will not be considered for competition.

Applicants using express/overnight mail services should allow two working days prior to the deadline date for receipt of applications. (Applicants are cautioned that express overnight mail services do not always deliver as agreed). See Section IV.6. for more detailed information on submission requirements.

Extension of deadlines: ACF may extend application deadlines when circumstances such as acts of God (floods, hurricanes, etc.) occur, or when there are widespread disruptions of mail service, or in other rare cases. A determination to extend or waive deadline requirements rests with the Chief Grants Management Officer.

See Section IV.6 for address information for application submissions.

What to Submit	Required Content	Required Form or Format	When to Submit
Table of Contents	As described in Section IV.2.	Consistent with guidance in “Content and Form of Application Submission” section of this announcement.	By application due date.
Abstract of Proposed Project	As described in Section IV.2.	Consistent with guidance in “Content and Form of Application Submission” section of this announcement.	By application due date.
Completed Standard Form 424	As described in Section IV.2.	May be found on http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/forms.htm	By application due date.
Completed Standard Form 424A	As described in Section IV.2.	May be found on http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/forms.htm	By application due date.
Narrative Budget Justification	As described in Section IV.2.	Consistent with guidance in “Content and Form of Application Submission” section of this announcement.	By application due date.
Project Narrative	As described in Section IV.2.	Consistent with guidance in “Content and Form of Application Submission” section of this announcement.	By application due date.
Certification regarding lobbying	As described in Section IV.2.	May be found on http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/forms.htm	By time of award.

Certification regarding environmental tobacco smoke	As described in Section IV.2.	May be found on http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/forms.htm	By time of award.
Certification regarding non-construction programs	As described in Section IV.2.	May be found on http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/forms.htm	By time of award.

4. Intergovernmental Review:

This program is not subject to Executive Order 12372, “Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs,” or 45 CFR Part 100, “Intergovernmental Review of Department of Health and Human Services Programs and Activities.”

5. Funding Restrictions:

Grant awards will not allow reimbursement of pre-award costs.

Construction is not an allowable activity or expenditure under this solicitation.

Applicants should understand that OCSE will not award grants for demonstration projects that:

- (a) Duplicate automated data processing and information retrieval system requirements/enhancements and associated tasks which are specified in the Social Security Act.
- (b) Cover costs for routine activities which would normally be reimbursed under the Child Support Enforcement Program, e.g., adding staff positions to perform routine CSE tasks, or by other Federal funding sources. Proposals and their accompanying budgets will be reviewed from this perspective.

Number of Projects in Application

Applicants may submit different applications covering different priority areas or they may submit different applications for different projects under one priority area; however, **they may not submit one application for the same project covering multiple priority areas.**

6. Other Submission Requirements:

Submission by Mail: An applicant must provide an original application with all attachments signed by an authorized representative and two copies. The application must be received at the address below by 4:30 p.m., eastern time, on or before the closing date. Applicants are responsible for mailing applications well in advance to ensure that the application is received on or before the deadline date and time.

Administration for Children and Families
Office of Grants Management
Division of Discretionary Grants
370 L'Enfant Promenade, SW., 4th Floor West
Washington, DC 20447
ATTN: Sylvia M. Johnson, Section 1115 Application

Hand Delivery: An applicant must provide an original application with all attachments signed by an authorized representative and two copies. The application must be received at the address below by 4:30 p.m., eastern time, on or before the closing date.

Applications that are hand delivered will be accepted between the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., eastern time, Monday through Friday (excluding Federal holidays). Applications may be delivered to:

ACF Mailroom
2nd Floor (near loading dock)
Aerospace Building
901 D Street, SW.
Washington, DC 20024

Electronic Submission: <http://www.Grants.gov> Please see section **IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission**, for guidelines and requirements when submitting applications electronically.

ACF will not send applicants an acknowledgement of receipt for applications received during the application period.

ACF cannot accommodate transmission of applications by fax.

V. Application Review Information

The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (P.L. 104-13)

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 35 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed and reviewing the collection information.

The project description is approved under OMB control number 0970-0139 which expires 4/30/2007.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

1. Criteria:

The following are instructions and guidelines on how to prepare the “project summary/abstract” and “Full Project Description” sections of the application. Under the evaluation criteria section, note that each criterion is preceded by the generic evaluation requirement under the ACF Uniform Project Description (UPD).

PART I THE PROJECT DESCRIPTION OVERVIEW

PURPOSE

The project description provides a major means by which an application is evaluated and ranked to compete with other applications for available assistance. The project description should be concise and complete and should address the activity for which Federal funds are being requested. Supporting documents should be included where they can present information clearly and succinctly. In preparing your project description, information responsive to each of the requested evaluation criteria must be provided. Awarding offices use this and other information in making their funding recommendations. It is important, therefore, that this information be included in the application in a manner that is clear and complete.

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS AND INSTRUCTIONS

ACF is particularly interested in specific project descriptions that focus on outcomes and convey strategies for achieving intended performance. Project descriptions are evaluated on the basis of substance and measurable outcomes, not length. Extensive exhibits are not required. Cross-referencing should be used rather than repetition. Supporting information concerning activities that will not be directly funded by the grant or information that does not directly pertain to an integral part of the grant funded activity should be placed in an appendix.

Pages should be numbered and a table of contents should be included for easy reference.

PART II GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR PREPARING A FULL PROJECT DESCRIPTION

INTRODUCTION

Applicants required to submit a full project description shall prepare the project description statement in accordance with the following instructions while being aware of the specified evaluation criteria. The text options give a broad overview of what your project description should include while the evaluation criteria identifies the measures that will be used to evaluate applications.

PROJECT SUMMARY/ABSTRACT

Provide a summary of the project description (a page or less) with reference to the funding request.

OBJECTIVES AND NEED FOR ASSISTANCE

Clearly identify the physical, economic, social, financial, institutional, and/or other problem(s) requiring a solution. The need for assistance must be demonstrated and the principal and subordinate objectives of the project must be clearly stated; supporting documentation, such as letters of support and testimonials from concerned interests other than the applicant, may be included. Any relevant data based on planning studies should be included or referred to in the endnotes/footnotes. Incorporate demographic data and participant/beneficiary information, as needed. In developing the project description, the applicant may volunteer or be requested to provide information on the total range of projects currently being conducted and supported (or to be initiated), some of which may be outside the scope of the program announcement.

APPROACH

Outline a plan of action that describes the scope and detail of how the proposed work will be accomplished. Account for all functions or activities identified in the application. Cite factors that might accelerate or decelerate the work and state your reason for taking the proposed approach rather than others. Describe any unusual features of the project such as design or technological innovations, reductions in cost or time, or extraordinary social and community involvement.

Provide quantitative monthly or quarterly projections of the accomplishments to be achieved for each function or activity in such terms as the number of people to be served and the number of activities accomplished. When accomplishments cannot be quantified by activity or function, list them in chronological order to show the schedule of accomplishments and their target dates.

If any data is to be collected, maintained, and/or disseminated, clearance may be required from the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB). This clearance pertains to any "collection of information that is conducted or sponsored by ACF."

List organizations, cooperating entities, consultants, or other key individuals who will work on the project, along with a short description of the nature of their effort or contribution.

EVALUATION

Provide a narrative addressing how the conduct of the project and the results of the project will be evaluated. In addressing the evaluation of results, state how you will determine the extent to which the project has achieved its stated objectives and the extent to which the accomplishment of objectives can be attributed to the project. Discuss the criteria to be used to evaluate results, and explain the methodology that will be used to determine if the needs identified and discussed are being met and if the project results and benefits are being achieved. With respect to the conduct of the project, define the procedures to be employed to determine whether the project is

being conducted in a manner consistent with the work plan presented and discuss the impact of the project's various activities on the project's effectiveness.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Following are requests for additional information that need to be included in the application:

STAFF AND POSITION DATA

Provide a biographical sketch and job description for each key person appointed. Job descriptions for each vacant key position should be included as well. As new key staff is appointed, biographical sketches will also be required.

BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION

Provide a budget with line item detail and detailed calculations for each budget object class identified on the Budget Information form. Detailed calculations must include estimation methods, quantities, unit costs, and other similar quantitative detail sufficient for the calculation to be duplicated. Also include a breakout by the funding sources identified in Block 15 of the SF-424.

Provide a narrative budget justification that describes how the categorical costs are derived. Discuss the necessity, reasonableness, and allocability of the proposed costs.

PERSONNEL

Description: Costs of employee salaries and wages.

Justification: Identify the project director or principal investigator, if known. For each staff person, provide the title, time commitment to the project (in months), time commitment to the project (as a percentage or full-time equivalent), annual salary, grant salary, wage rates, etc. Do not include the costs of consultants or personnel costs of delegate agencies or of specific project(s) or businesses to be financed by the applicant.

FRINGE BENEFITS

Description: Costs of employee fringe benefits unless treated as part of an approved indirect cost rate.

Justification: Provide a breakdown of the amounts and percentages that comprise fringe benefit costs such as health insurance, FICA, retirement insurance, taxes, etc.

TRAVEL

Description: Costs of project-related travel by employees of the applicant organization (does not include consultant travel).

Justification: For each trip, show the total number of traveler(s), travel destination, duration of trip, per diem, mileage allowances, if privately owned vehicles will be used, and other transportation costs and subsistence allowances. Travel costs for key staff to attend ACF-sponsored workshops should be detailed in the budget.

EQUIPMENT

Description: "Equipment" means an article of nonexpendable, tangible personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost which equals or exceeds the lesser of (a) the capitalization level established by the organization for the financial statement purposes, or (b) \$5,000. (Note: Acquisition cost means the net invoice unit price of an item of equipment, including the cost of any modifications, attachments, accessories, or auxiliary apparatus necessary to make it usable for the purpose for which it is acquired. Ancillary charges, such as taxes, duty, protective in-transit insurance, freight, and installation shall be included in or excluded from acquisition cost in accordance with the organization's regular written accounting practices.)

Justification: For each type of equipment requested, provide a description of the equipment, the cost per unit, the number of units, the total cost, and a plan for use on the project, as well as use or disposal of the equipment after the project ends. An applicant organization that uses its own definition for equipment should provide a copy of its policy or section of its policy, which includes the equipment definition.

SUPPLIES

Description: Costs of all tangible personal property other than that included under the Equipment category.

Justification: Specify general categories of supplies and their costs. Show computations and provide other information, which supports the amount requested.

CONTRACTUAL

Description: Costs of all contracts for services and goods except for those that belong under other categories such as equipment, supplies, construction, etc. Include third-party evaluation contracts (if applicable) and contracts with secondary recipient organizations, including delegate agencies and specific project(s) or businesses to be financed by the applicant.

Justification: Demonstrate that all procurement transactions will be conducted in a manner to provide, to the maximum extent practical, open and free competition. Recipients and subrecipients, other than States that are required to use Part 92 procedures, must justify any anticipated procurement action that is expected to be awarded without competition and exceed the simplified acquisition threshold fixed at 41 USC 403(11) (currently set at \$100,000). Recipients might be required to make available to ACF pre-award reviews and procurement documents, such as requests for proposals or invitations for bids, independent cost estimates, etc.

Note: Whenever the applicant intends to delegate part of the project to another agency, the applicant must provide a detailed budget and budget narrative for each delegate agency, by agency title, along with the same supporting information referred to in these instructions.

OTHER

Enter the total of all other costs. Such costs, where applicable and appropriate, may include but are not limited to insurance, food, medical and dental costs (noncontractual), professional services costs, space and equipment rentals, printing and publication, computer use, training costs, such as tuition and stipends, staff development costs, and administrative costs.

Justification: Provide computations, a narrative description and a justification for each cost under this category.

NONFEDERAL RESOURCES

Description: Amounts of non-Federal resources that will be used to support the project as identified in Block 15 of the SF-424.

Justification: The firm commitment of these resources must be documented and submitted with the application so the applicant is given credit in the review process. A detailed budget must be prepared for each funding source.

Evaluation Criteria:

The following evaluation criteria appear in weighted descending order. The corresponding score values indicate the relative importance that ACF places on each evaluation criterion.

In considering how applicants will carry out the responsibilities addressed under this announcement, competing applications for financial assistance will be reviewed and evaluated against the following criteria:

OBJECTIVES AND NEED FOR ASSISTANCE

20 points

The application pinpoints the problem or issue requiring a solution and demonstrates the need for the assistance; states the goals and principal and subordinate objectives of the project; provides supporting documentation or other testimonies from concerned interests other than the applicant; identifies other successful demonstration projects that may have implications for the proposed demonstration (which should include a review of the relevant literature); identifies the conceptual or theoretical framework for this model; and describes whether the proposed project replicates or modifies previously evaluated model(s) addressing the identified need.

APPROACH

20 points

The application outlines a sound and workable plan of action and timeline, and details how the proposed work will be accomplished; describes the approach in detail and points out its unique

features; cites factors that might accelerate or delay this approach, giving acceptable reasons for taking this approach as opposed to others; describes and supports any unusual features of the project, such as extraordinary social and community involvement; includes an adequate staffing plan that lists key and support staff, consultants, and any agency, organization, other key group, and/or advisory panels involved or proposed; and describes the responsibilities, activities, and/or training plans for each (if applicable).

Random assignment demonstrations are the preferred type of projects where they can be done. Through demonstrations using experimental and control groups, results are likely to be more definitive and therefore, the project will have clear value, whether or not it is successful.

RESULTS OR BENEFITS EXPECTED

20 points

The application identifies the results and benefits to be derived, the extent to which they are consistent with the goals and objectives of the project, their contributions to policy and practice in promoting the objectives of the Title IV-D program listed in section 451 of the Act, and the extent to which the proposed project costs are reasonable in view of the expected results.

EVALUATION

20 points

The application identifies the kinds of data to be collected and maintained, describes procedures for informed consent of participants, where applicable, and discusses the criteria to be used to evaluate the results of the project. The application describes the evaluation methodology to be used to determine if the process proposed was implemented, if the needs identified were addressed, and if the benefits expected were achieved. Preferred evaluations will include: 1) a process evaluation, 2) an outcome evaluation, and 3) an impact evaluation.

Independent evaluations are the normal and preferred evaluation arrangements for all projects. An independent evaluation contractor is an entity independent of the executive branch of State government (not including State universities). The evaluator should be qualified and experienced in evaluating experiments of the nature, design, scale, and duration of that proposed by the State.

Sound evaluations to determine whether or not project purposes have been realized and if the project is replicable are of importance to child support enforcement policy makers. Accordingly, careful attention should be paid to the evaluation component of the project application. Funding for the evaluation should also be estimated with this in mind. Funds allocated for evaluations should represent a meaningful share of the overall budget proposal. In order to demonstrate "meaningful share," the applicant should include an estimate that shows clearly the scope and level of effort of the proposed evaluation activity. A meaningful evaluation will show adequate budget allocations for such activities as local site data collection, training, sampling, if appropriate, random assignment to experimental and control groups, if appropriate, and third party consultation on analysis and other aspects of evaluation.

ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILES

10 points

The application identifies the educational and professional background of the project director and key project staff and the experience of the organization to demonstrate the applicant's ability to administer and implement the project effectively and efficiently.

BUDGET NARRATIVE

10 points

The application proposes reasonable project costs and allocates sufficient funds appropriately across activities to accomplish the objectives.

The application describes the relationships between the proposed project and other federally assisted work planned, anticipated or underway by the applicant. If the project proposed is collaboration, the application must describe the nature and extent of the collaboration, including the responsibilities of the respective agencies or organizations in carrying out the activities identified in the work plan.

The description of activities to be conducted under the contract must provide, for each person, detail of the level of person-hours of each position and their annual salary and the cost for this contract and a delineation of the costs for the same categories listed in row 6 (Object Class Categories) of the Form 424A.

Although the general rule stated above under the heading TRAVEL suggests otherwise, applicants should NOT include funds for trips to conferences or to OCSE's Central Office in Washington, DC. If OCSE requests such visits, it will reimburse the grantee for them.

Construction costs may not be included in the project.

2. Review and Selection Process

Each application submitted under this program announcement will undergo a pre-review to determine that (1) the application was received by the closing date and submitted in accordance with the instructions in this announcement and (2) the applicant is eligible for funding. **It is necessary that applicants state specifically for which priority area they are applying.**

Applications which pass the initial ACF screening will be evaluated and rated by an independent review panel on the basis of specific evaluation criteria. The results of these reviews will assist the Commissioner and OCSE program staff in considering competing applications. Reviewers' scores will weigh heavily in funding decisions but will not be the only factors considered.

Applications generally will be considered in order of the average scores assigned by reviewers. However, highly ranked applications are not guaranteed funding because other factors are taken into consideration. These include, but are not limited to, the number of similar types of existing grants or projects funded with OCSE funds in the last five years; comments of reviewers and government officials; staff evaluation and input; geographic distribution; previous program performance of applicants; compliance with grant terms under previous DHHS grants; audit

reports; investigative reports; an applicant's progress in resolving any final audit disallowance on previous OCSE or other Federal agency grants. OCSE will consider the geographic distribution of funds among States and the relative proportion of funding among rural and urban areas. The evaluation criteria were designed to assess the quality of a proposed project and to determine the likelihood of its success. The evaluation criteria are closely related and are considered as a whole in judging the overall quality of an application. Points are awarded only to applications which are responsive to the evaluation criteria within the context of this program announcement.

Federal reviewers will be used for the review process.

Approved but Unfunded Applications:

In cases where more applications are approved for funding than ACF can fund with the money available, the Grants Officer shall fund applications in their order of approval until funds run out. In this case, ACF has the option of carrying over the approved applications up to a year for funding consideration in a later competition of the same program. These applications need not be reviewed and scored again if the program's evaluation criteria have not changed. However, they must then be placed in rank order along with other applications in later competition.

3. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

The anticipated starting date for the new awards is July 1, 2005. Projects may run through the following dates: for Priority Areas 1 and 2, renewal upon successful progress until June 30, 2008; and Priority Areas 3 and 4 may run through November 30, 2006, a length of 17 months. The period of each award is also specified under each Priority Area.

VI. Award Administration Information

1. Award Notices:

The successful applicants will be notified through the issuance of a Financial Assistance Award document which sets forth the amount of funds granted, the terms and conditions of the grant, the budget period for which initial support will be given, the non-Federal share to be provided, and the total project period for which support is contemplated. The Financial assistance Award will be signed by the Grants Officer and transmitted via postal mail.

States whose applications will not be funded will be notified in writing.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements:

45 CFR Part 92

Grantees are subject to the requirements in 45 CFR Part 92.

Notice of Possible Cross-site Evaluation

While local evaluation of individual projects is a valued requirement for these projects, there is also the possibility that individual projects may be asked to gather and compile data in a manner that facilitates cross-site evaluation. It is anticipated that cross-site evaluations for some projects may be undertaken in this and subsequent years, using funds in addition to those referenced in this announcement. Applicants must agree to become part of, and fully cooperate with, cross-site evaluators, should OCSE undertake such an evaluation. Grantees should be prepared to meet with other grantees, Federal officials, and the evaluator, as appropriate. If a cross-site evaluation is conducted, OCSE will bear the cost of it.

3. Reporting Requirements:

Programmatic Reports: Quarterly
Financial Reports: Quarterly

All grantees are required to submit semi-annual (quarterly or annual) program reports; grantees are also required to submit quarterly expenditure reports using the required financial standard form (SF-269) which can be found at the following URL:

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/forms.htm>

Final reports are due 90 days after the end of the grant period.

VII. Agency Contacts

Program Office Contact:

James H. Rich
ACF/OCSE
370 L'Enfant Promenade, SW.
Washington, DC 20447
Phone: 202-401-3447
E-mail: jrich@acf.hhs.gov

Grants Management Office Contact:

Sylvia M. Johnson
Office of Grants Management, Division of Discretionary Grants
Administration for Children and Families
370 L'Enfant Promenade, SW., 4th Floor West
Washington, DC 20447
Phone: 202-401-4524
E-mail: SYJohnson@acf.hhs.gov

VIII. Other Information

Applicants will not be sent acknowledgements of received applications.

Additional information about this program and its purpose can be located on the following website: URL: www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cse/

Dated:

David H. Siegel
Acting Commissioner
Office of Child Support Enforcement